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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 MUSCAT 000706

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STATE FOR NEA, NEA/ARPI, T

E.O. 12958: DECL: 05/03/2016

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PTER](#) [MOPS](#) [KNNP](#) [XF](#) [MU](#)

SUBJECT: SAYYID BADR PREVIEWS GCC HEADS OF STATE  
CONSULTATIVE MEETING

REF: A. STATE 68574

[1](#)B. MUSCAT 671

[1](#)C. STATE 67471

[1](#)D. STATE 65124

Classified By: Ambassador Gary A. Grappo. Reason: 1.4 (b, d).

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Summary  
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[1](#)1. (C) MFA Under Secretary Sayyid Badr al-Busaidi assured the Ambassador May 3 that Oman supports reconstruction efforts in Iraq, has forgiven all Iraqi debt, and will consider opening a diplomatic mission in Baghdad once the security situation there has improved. He indicated that Oman would support Iran's candidacy to the UN Human Rights Council should they decide to participate (septel), and expressed disappointment that the USG is not seeking a seat on the Council. He took on board USG points regarding Hamas, but replied that the GCC consultative meeting will have no fixed agenda and is not likely to generate an official statement. End Summary.

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Hamas, Iraq's New Government  
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[1](#)2. (C) In a May 3 meeting with MFA Under Secretary Sayyid Badr al-Busaidi, the Ambassador covered the USG talking points provided in reftels. The Under Secretary had little response to the Hamas points (most of which were covered at length in the April 25 meeting, ref B), other than to say that the GCC consultative meeting has no set agenda like the full summit. On Iraq, however, Sayyid Badr reiterated Oman's support for reconstruction efforts and confirmed its forgiveness of all Iraqi debt. He said that the Omani government has open lines of communication with Iraq, including direct and frequent contact between Foreign Ministers.

[1](#)3. (C) Opening a diplomatic mission in Baghdad, however, is wholly dependent on the security situation. Sayyid Badr stressed that it is not a political issue, but rather Oman doesn't have the necessary resources, such as convoys and guards, to ensure the safety of its diplomats. That said, FM Yusuf bin Alawi was considering an as-yet unscheduled visit to Iraq to greet the new government. The Ambassador encouraged the minister's travel and offered assistance in facilitating arrangements, if necessary.

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Sending Message to Iran  
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[1](#)4. (C) Again paralleling the April 25 discussion, the Ambassador took the opportunity to express appreciation for Oman's participation in the Proliferation Security Initiative, but reiterated USG hope that the Omani government will make a public statement of its support soon. Such public cooperation would send a strong signal to Tehran of regional opposition to its WMD ambitions. Sayyid Badr claimed that the problem is not whether Iran has nuclear weapons, but whether Tehran can be trusted to have them. The U.S and other western nations should seek to better understand the Iranian mindset and direct their efforts towards "bridging these gaps of confidence." The Under Secretary reminded the Ambassador of Oman's close

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relationship with Iran and its hope that through continued engagement it can effect positive change.

[1](#)5. (C) As reported septel, the Under Secretary surprisingly asserted that Oman would support Iran's candidacy to the UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC) should they decide to participate, arguing that including Iran on the Council could prove to be a more effective strategy in the long-term for moderating Iranian behavior. He also relayed his disappointment that the USG will not participate on the Council, noting that the USG's absence will likely result in an ineffective Council. The Ambassador countered forcefully

that backing flagrant rights abusers such as Iran would undermine concerted efforts to reform UN actions in support of human rights, which the discredited UNHRC had previously failed to do, and urged Oman to reconsider its position.

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Don't Expect GCC Statement  
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16. (C) The Under Secretary admitted that while Oman shares fundamental principles with the U.S., Oman's historical relationship with Iran will continue to shape its long-term efforts to effect change within Iran and achieve stability in the region. He explained that as Oman is trusted by Tehran, his government can be frank in its discussions with the Iranians and be taken seriously. "We listen to a lot of their 'crap' and are not afraid to call them on it," he said. Approaches will surely vary from country to country within the GCC, he readily admitted. The Under Secretary reminded the Ambassador that the USG's friends in this region are fully aware of Washington's concerns, but that the GCC Consultative Summit is a brief, informal event with an open agenda, and that no official statement on the discussions will be issued. He does not anticipate public "signals" emanating from the meeting.  
GRAPPO